# PELPUP NEWS

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LETTER FROM "PELPOP"

PELHAM PUPPETS LTD.,
MARLBOROUGH,
Wiltshire.
December, 1963.

Dear Pelpups,

A Happy Christmas to you all. The picture on the cover represents a message of goodwill to the children of all nations who belong to this Club.

In spite of nearly completing a record year for the number of puppets made, we have not done at all well with our new characters--no, I don't mean they are not selling well—on the contrary, too well and we have just not been able to make them fast enough. So I must apologise to all those who have not been successful in obtaining them. This apology must also be extended to some of our good and patient retailers. However, next year will see a big stride forward in this respect and I hope we shall fulfil all our orders.

First prize (two puppets, new characters may be included) in the Playwriting Competition goes to William Ug of Singapore for a delightful play called "The Legend of the Golden Lotus". It will require a lot of ingenuity to get that beautiful oriental atmosphere which its author has created. Some of Ian Nesbitt's stage effects found further on in this magazine might be a help for this play. Second prize (one puppet) goes to Margaret Tims for her short but active play "The Thing in the Cupboard."

So far I have not received enough entries for the "Friends I have made through the Club" Competition to announce a winner in this issue. They will be judged next May for the Summer Issue. For newcomers, the competition is an account of how you have made new friends through the Club, whether you have met up with local members, or made new friends through the pen friend section.

I have had some very good entries for the Photographic Competition. Valerie Smith certainly deserves first prize for her excellent picture, and second prize for Ceri Griffin. I have included two more which show some ingenuity by N. Davis and Nicholas Harwood. Prizes of one puppet to the following values will be given—First prize 52/6d., Second 36/-, Third 26/4d., Fourth about 15/-. This does not mean I shall always give fourth prizes, the normal is two.

I was very pleased to hear from Frantisek Hájek, head of the Central House of Creative Folk Art in Prague. He sent the picture shown overleaf, and in his letter he said:—

> ". . . . Our children would be happy to be able to exchange letters with your children and so I enclose the addresses of some of our ensembles, as I think it will be the best to select the most suitable partners as pen friends according to the letters from various ensemble members. Here are the addresses of two of the ensembles:
>
> The Puppet Theatre Ensemble of Julius Fucik's House of the Pioneers and the Youth, Prague 2, Czechoslovakia.
>
> For older children I would recommend :
>
> The Puppet Theatre Ensemble of the Apprentices School of the 'New Home,' nat. corp., Spisska Nova Ves, Czechoslovakia."

Owing to the fact that we have no members in Czechoslovakia I have asked for some individual addresses of children anxious to correspond with our mem-

bers which I can include in the next issue, but these addresses should be useful for groups or schools. I think it would be a wonderful way of increasing one's knowledge of puppetry and of getting to know people in other countries. May I suggest you consult your master or mistress in charge of Art. For those interested in obtaining a pen friend in Japan, the following address will be helpful:—

Association of Pen Friend Clubs of Japan,
Azabu Post Office,
Box No. 1,
Minato-ku,
Tokyo.

State in both cases that you are a group associated with, or members of, our Club and that you are seeking pen friends among children who are interested in puppetry, as they will not be children who are already members of our Club.

I have had many requests for Pop Groups like The Beatles and The Shadows, so I have shown how to make and dress one with the aid of one of our puppet kits. Unfortunately the legs of our puppet kits are shorter than those of our standard puppets, but each leg piece can be lengthened by cutting it in half and extending it by the insertion of an inch or two of the appropriate sized plastic tubing. Transparent petrol tubing is ideal and can be obtained from most garages.

There are more and more Pelpups giving shows; this is a good thing, but let me remind you that it is very important to keep up a high standard. This is not difficult as long as you remember one thing:—practise is essential. It is great fun giving shows, but a good measure of hard work must be expected. Impromptu shows are never very successful as the words and movements must be planned and learned. If you are miming your puppet to a record it is important that you play the record over and over again so that you know it by heart, then it is more likely that the movements of your puppet will work in unison with the record and not a second or two after it. This is particularly important with speech, when tape recordings are used.

I am still getting many letters signed just "S. So and So"—please say 'Sammy' or 'Sally' so at least I know whether you are a boy or a girl. This is particularly important if you are asking for a pen friend.

When I get a letter just asking for a pen friend I will record it but please do not expect an answer. I get so many letters to answer anyway, that it would be a help to be excused these.

Good luck with your puppets,

Yours puppetually,

PELPOP.

## NEWS OF PINKY AND PERKY By Jan Dalibor

It seems that for the coming three years all news about Pinky and Perky may be rather monotonous: a television series of sixteen Sunday afternoon programmes each winter, then a repeat in summer, and a very short summer season either here in England or in the States. However, let me tell you a little about the new format of the next series which will commence on Sunday, November 3rd. In it, Pinky and Perky sail on a musical voyage around the world on board the P.S.S. (Paddle Steam Ship) "Melodymaster" under Captain Zachary Scuttle. The crew consists of Bertie Bonkers, the Elephant as Chief Engineer, Midge Mouse as the Galley Boy, Pepper as the ship's parrot, and Pinky and Perky as First and Second Mates. On their voyage they will meet some new creatures: Waterton Walrus, Esq., Splash and Splutter—the singing seals, Ginny the giraffe, etc., besides the old favourites from previous series.

*The Puppet Theatre Ensemble of the apprentices' school affiliated to the New Home Nat. Corp at Spisská Nová Ves. S. Tarachovski: "On the Pike's Order".*

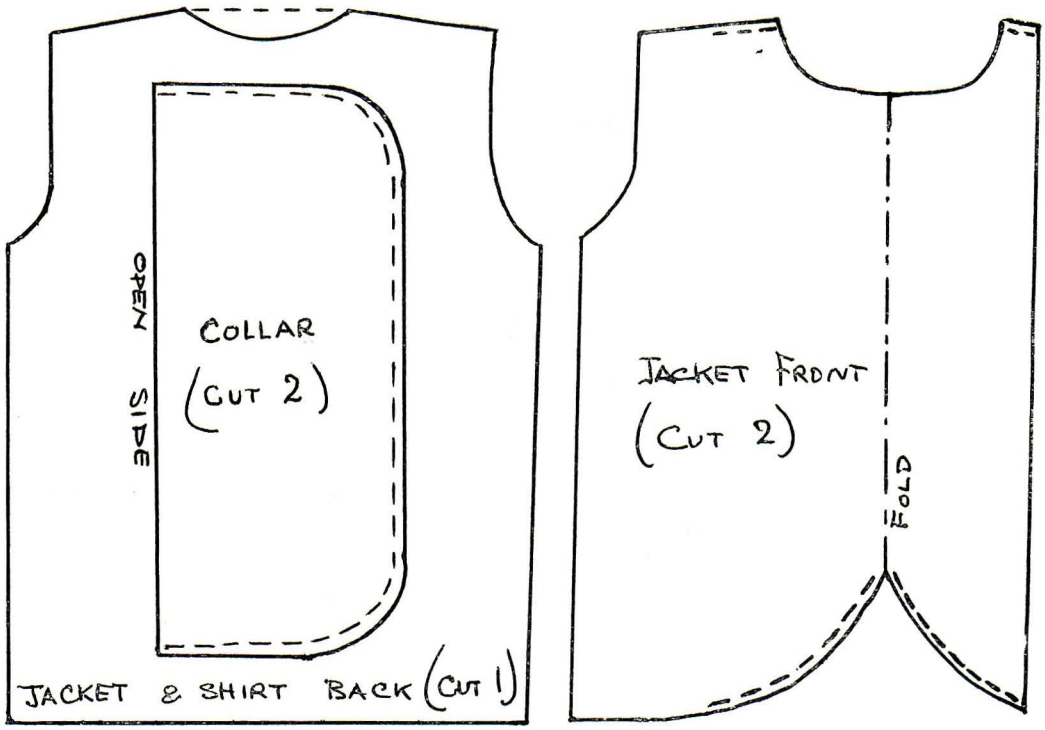
# EYE-WITNESS *by* JAN BUSSELL

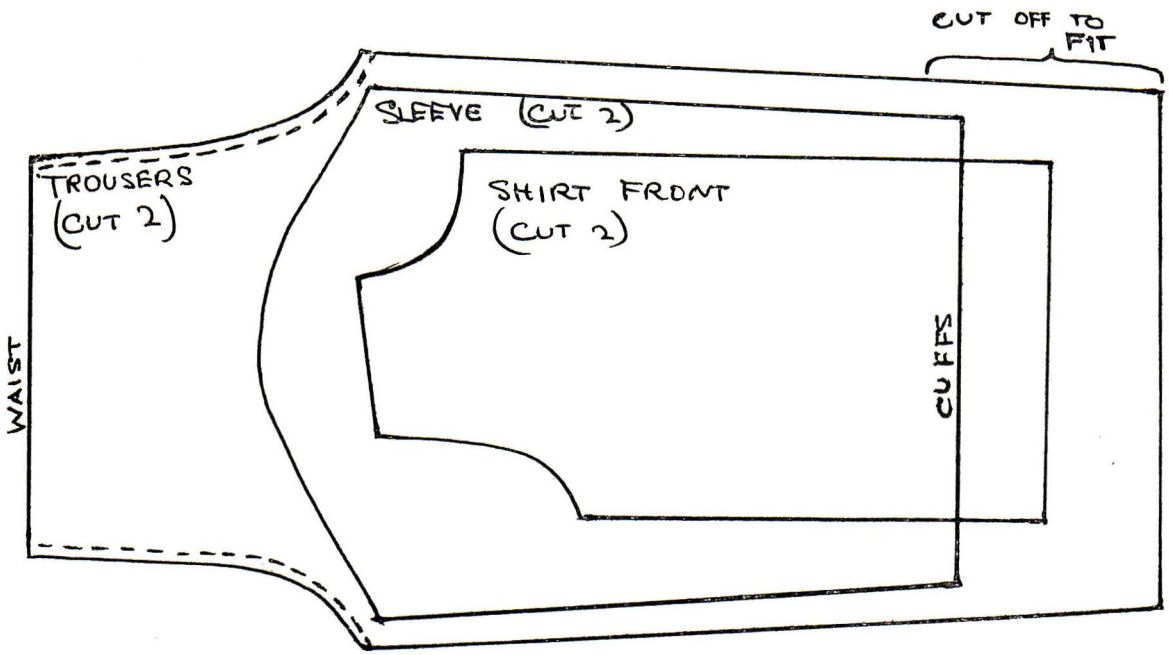
In Czechoslovakia there are almost certainly more puppet theatres than in any other country in the world. Besides professional theatres there are also a very large number of amateur puppeteers—about 1,800 groups—and, as many of these groups number from 40 to 60 people, this means an awful lot of puppeteers! Each year a competition is held amongst the amateur societies. First a jury travels round the country to see the different performances and pick out the twelve best. These are then invited to come to a special festival where they perform in turn in the town theatre, a different company each night.

Two years ago Ann Hogarth and I were invited to attend one of these festivals, and we found it a most exciting experience. In the mornings everyone concerned—about a thousand people—meets in a large hall to discuss and praise or criticise the play of the night before. At the end of the discussion the producer of the particular play is allowed to reply to the comments. Sometimes he is ashamed and apologetic, if the criticism has been hard; sometimes he is unrepentant, and says he would do it just the same way again, if he had to, because in his opinion that is how it should be done.

The year we were there all the performers were grown-ups, but next year's festival is to have special emphasis on junior performers. It is to take place at Karlsbad from 23rd–30th May, 1964. The Czech organisers are interested in the possibility of an English amateur group going there to perform. The group—junior or adult—would have to pay their own fares there and back, but would have all expenses for food and hotels in Czechoslovakia paid for them. But first of all, of course, we must be sure that they have a programme of a sufficiently high standard, for they will be competing with some of the best in the world. So if any of you would be interested in going please let me know. Write to me "c/o British UNIMA Section, 23a Southampton Place, London, W.C.2. (UNIMA, as you probably know, stands for Union Internationale des Marionettes, the International Society for puppeteers.) Then I will try to arrange somehow for one of our UNIMA members to see your show and give you further details.

Do not feel that, because most of the Czech companies are large, the English one should be large too. The Czechs are very interested to see how we work with small numbers, and with everyone doing a bit of everything, from scene changing to lighting, as well as the manipulation and speech. They usually have a different set of people for each of these jobs! What is important, however, is that the show must be good—well manipulated, well staged, well spoken, and good material. It should last about half an hour or longer.


COLLAR
(CUT 2)
OPEN SIDE
JACKET & SHIRT BACK (CUT 1)
JACKET FRONT
(CUT 2)
FOLD


CUT OFF TO FIT
SLEEVE (CUT 2)
TROUSERS
(CUT 2)
SHIRT FRONT
(CUT 2)
WAIST
CUFFS

# HOW TO MAKE A POP SINGER FROM A PUPPET KIT

It will be necessary for you to trace the patterns on to thin paper, which you can then cut out.

For material, choose a light grey for the jacket and trousers, remembering that it must not be too thick or stiff. The shirt can be white or check.

Cut one shirt back and two shirt fronts. With right side of material facing inwards join top of shoulders (Fig. 1). I am sorry the dotted lines are missing. Cut two collars, join edges—dotted. Turn inside out and press. Open shirt and join collar to neck line (Fig. 2). There is no need to put sleeves in the shirt. Fold again, only inside out, and join to side seams. Turn right way round and press.

When cutting back for jacket, cut straight across neck-line (shown with dotted line). Cut two fronts, fold along dotted line (make sure you make a pair) and join as shown; turn inside out and press. Place both in position on back piece (right side inwards) and join along shoulders as with shirt. Cut two sleeve patterns—white cuffs (or same as shirt), fold over and join to end of sleeve, then press flat, add the black binding (if you are using it round coat). Lay jacket flat and join arms (Fig. 3), working the sleeve pattern round the shoulder opening. Fold jacket together again inside out and join arm and side seams (Fig. 4). Hem round bottom of jacket and add, if you are using it, the thin black tape or bias binding round edge of jacket and along top of pockets.

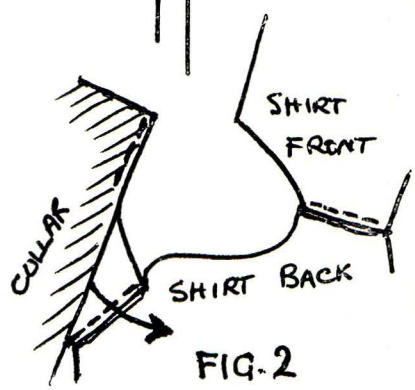


FIG. 2

TROUSERS.—The pattern shown is the correct length for our standard puppets, in case you should be redressing one you already have. As our puppet kits have slightly shorter legs you will have to cut a little off the length of the pattern. Place the two patterns together outside inwards and join along dotted lines. Open waist, and press with opposite stitch lines together, join seams round legs and hem the bottom of each leg at the correct length. You will notice I have made the shoes look more pointed; this can easily be done with a knife and plenty of care.

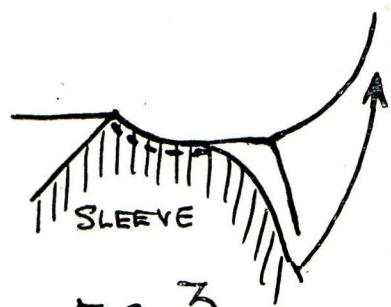


FIG. 3

You will need to make a guitar out of wood; a cord round his neck should hold the box end. A string is attached to the top end of the guitar, which then passes through his left hand and tied to the control. The string to his right hand must be long enough to let this hand hang down below his guitar when the bar to which it is attached is held level with the main bar. (Remember the kit controls are two single bars.) To operate, hold both bars in one hand and draw string back between other hand string and left head string. Move up and down to rhythm of music. Bounce and rock the control also to same rhythm. Occasionally kick legs and twist body.

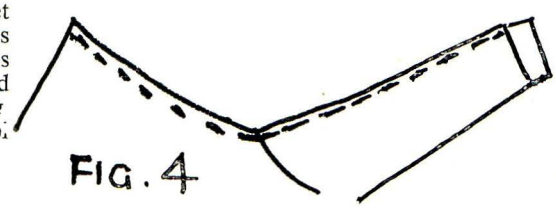
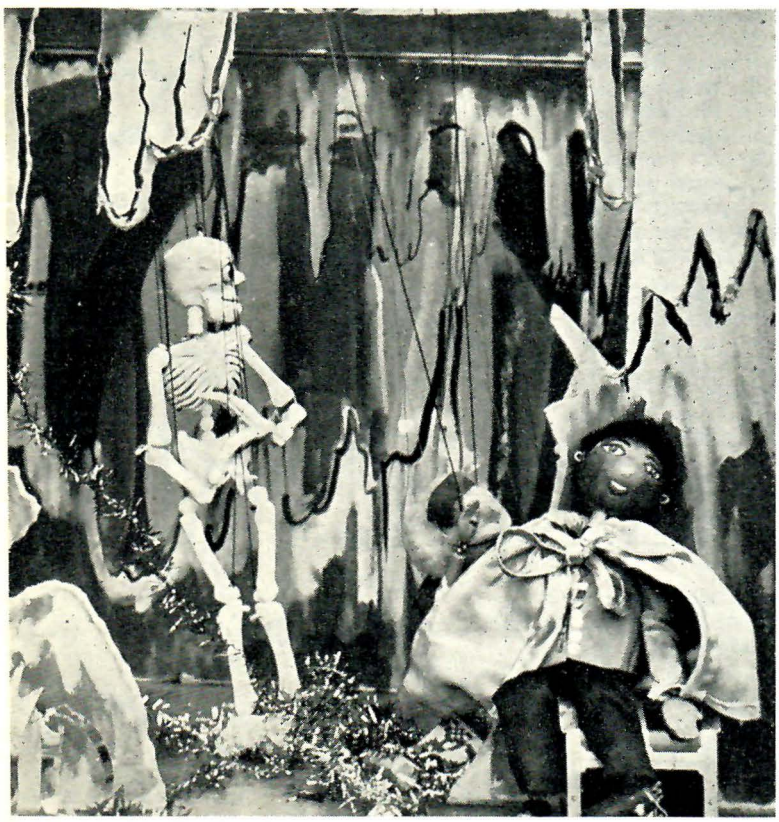


FIG. 4

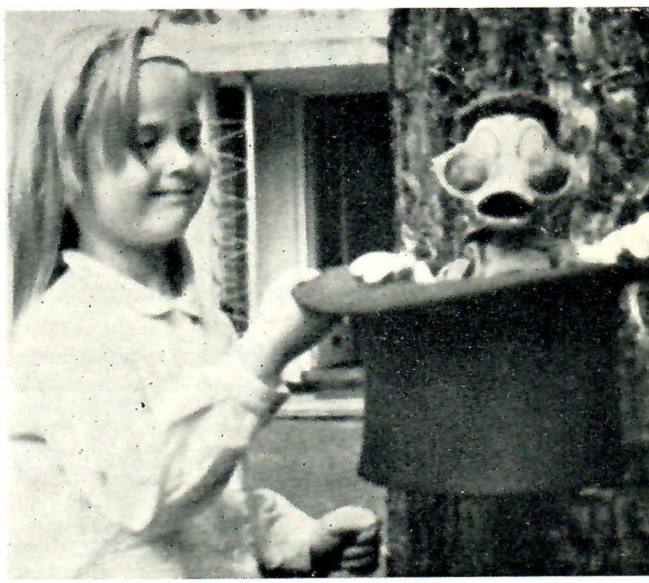
(1) Valerie Smith

(3) *"I never knew fertilizer worked so well."*
—N. Davis



(2) Ceri Griffin

# PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



(4) Nicholas Harwood

# PUPPET PLAYS

## "LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN LOTUS" By WILLIAM UG (Singapore)

*Characters:*

LOTUS LOTUS ..... A Golden Lotus
PRINCE YUAN ..... A Young and Handsome Man
STARLIGHT ..... A Beautiful Fairy
DESPAIR ..... A Wicked and Hideous Monster
A NARRATOR

*Scene I*

*Scenery:* A beautiful moonlight glade with a pond full of beautiful flowers surrounding a golden lotus.

NARRATOR: **Once upon a time in ancient China, when flowers and animals had the power to change themselves into beautiful magical beings, there grows a golden lotus on the beautiful Rainbow Mountains. When the night is beautiful it would change into a beautiful maiden and dance with her own shadow.**

CURTAIN

(*Music and singing can be heard. Smoke flowing out of the pond and suddenly the Lotus maiden appears.*)

LOTUS: **How beautiful is tonight!** (*She steps out of the pond and begins to dance, barely touching the ground.*) **Oh! how I long to dance with a handsome Prince instead of dancing with my own shadow!**

P. YUAN: **Your wish is granted, fair damsel.**

LOTUS: **Oh!**

P. YUAN: **Do not be afraid, fair damsel. It was love at first sight and I have come for your hand because your beauty has spread far and wide. Will you be my bride?**

LOTUS: **Yes, please** (*shyly*).

P. YUAN: **Let us leave here and go back to my palace.** (*As they are preparing to leave the Monster enters.*)

DESPAIR: **Am I chosen, fair damsel? Wasn't I one of your suitors? Ha, ha, ha, ha!** (*Lotus cowers back with fright and screams as the monster gets nearer and nearer.*)

LOTUS: **No, No! I don't want to marry you.**

P.YUAN: **Lotus, I'll save you!** (*He rushes at the Monster.*)

DESPAIR: **Silly fool! Who dares to challenge Despair the Wicked?** (*He waves his hands and chants a spell.*) **You will stand like a statue until the Princess marries me.** (*The Prince freezes into a stiff position as the Monster pulls Lotus away.*)

CURTAIN

*Scene II*

*Scenery:* In a beautiful garden in the evening.

NARRATOR: **Ladies and gentlemen, most of you would like to find out what happened to the Prince after the Wicked Monster left. In order to do this—then, on with the show!**

CURTAIN

P. YUAN (*bowing*): **Thank you, kind fairy, for rescuing me but now to rescue Lotus.**

STARLIGHT: **I must leave you now, but remember when you meet the Monster recite the magic spell and the magic whip will come to your aid, but don't be disappointed even if you can't save her from her terrible fate. Hurry, or it will be too late.** (*Disappears from the stage.*)

P. YUAN: **According to her there will be a moonbeam to take me to my destination. As the moon is rising I better wait for it.** (*Switch off all lights except for a spotlight which is supposed to be the moonbeam.*) **The moonbeam has arrived and I must be on my way.** (*He walks up the moonbeam.*) **I wonder what is the terrible fate which the Fairy refused to tell me about.**

CURTAIN

*Scene III*

*Scenery:* A dimly lit cave with Lotus in the middle.

NARRATOR: **The Prince finally arrived at the cave of Despair. Can he rescue his beloved and what has happened to her? Remember her terrible fate and what it was?**

CURTAIN

(*The Monster is hovering around Lotus.*)

DESPAIR: **Now, will you marry me? If you don't. . . .**

LOTUS: **No, no! Not ever, whatever you do to me.**

DESPAIR: **Since you are so stubborn I think I must try out some of my spells.** (*He waves his hands and chants a spell.*) **Fire of Hades! I summon thee! Be as red and hot as you can be. Burn this stubbon creature until she marries me.** (*Fire rises and gradually Lotus faints.*)

DESPAIR: **So still you refuse. Ha, ha, ha. Wait till I destroy your beauty.** (*As he is about to scratch her face the Prince enters.*)

P. YUAN: **Stop! I dare to challenge thee!** (*The Monster rushes at him.*) **Magic Whip, I pray to thee, help me to beat this monster which is attacking me.** (*The Whip flies out and chases the Monster around the stage.*)

DESPAIR: **Why! No, no, no.** (*Falls with a chilling scream. Prince goes over to Lotus.*)

P. YUAN: **Lotus! What has happened to you?** (*Sadly.*) **She's dead. What shall I do now?**

FAIRY (*appearing*): **Do not be so unhappy, Prince. She cannot escape from her terrible fate. But, if you still love her, follow this path and do not ask any questions. Go!**

P. YUAN: **But. . . .** (*Exits sadly.*)

CURTAIN

*Scene IV*

*Scenery:* Heaven, clouds flowing about.

NARRATOR: **Ladies and gentlemen, this is the last scene of our show and what do you think about it? Will it have a happy ending or will it be a tragedy? Can you guess?**

CURTAIN

P. YUAN (*entering*): **How beautiful it is! Ask me if it is Heaven?** (*Looks about. Singing and music can be heard softly in the background. The thick clouds separate and reveal the beautiful Lotus.*)

P. YUAN (*surprised*): **Lotus!**

LOTUS (*going towards Prince*): **My Prince! I have waited for so long for you to come.**
P. YUAN: **Lotus! I thought that you were dead.**
LOTUS: **Yes, but I am a fairy now because of my good behaviour on earth and the Jade King has even given us permission to live in love and matrimony.**
P. YUAN: **Then we must really thank him. Come!** (*The clouds gradually thicken and cover them. Music.*)

CURTAIN

NARRATOR: **Before we say goodbye, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you all for coming to this show and supporting it. Once again, thank you and goodnight everyone.**

# THE THING IN THE CUPBOARD By NARGARET TIMS

*Characters:* SAMMY THE SAILOR, MITZI, SKELETON, GHOSTS.
*Scene:* Trees, bushes, chairs, table, cupboard, bed.

(*Sammy the Sailor is on leave. He enters stage left singing to tune of "Popeye the Sailor Man".*)

SAMMY: **I'm Sammy the Sailor Man**
**I'm home on leave, I am,**
**I'm seeing my wife**
**... er ... um ...** (*scratches chin*)
**I'll have the time of my life,**
**I'm Sammy the Sailor man.**
**Home, ahoy!** (*He points to off stage right*). **Gosh, I'm tired.** (*He exits stage right.*)
(*Eerie music, sound of knocking off stage.*)
SAMMY: **Mitzi, Mitzi! I'm home.** (*Creak off stage*). (*Sammy pokes his head round curtain, down stage right.*) **Oh-ah!** (*Comes in*). **Well, well.** (*Looks round nervously.*) **Wh-wh-what has hap-happened?** (*Moves to chair upstage left. He is just sitting down when the chair moves.* (*Sammy sits on floor.*) **Ow-ow-ow!** (*Looks round, sees rat under table, jumps up with yell. Rat exits stage right.* (*Sammy gets up shakily*). **I must steady me nerves. Now where's that blinking whiskey? I know! It's in the cupboard.** (*Goes to cupboard up stage left. Opens it. Out falls Skeleton.*) **A-ah! Ugh! Shiver me timbers. Wrrr. Oooh. Glup!** (*Sammy faints. Pause. Ghosts appear from above and sides of stage. Sammy comes out of faint. Cat prowls across front of stage. Cobwebs are falling. Sammy stands up totters and faints. Mitzi enters stage left.*)
MITZIE (*surprised*): **Sammy! Wakey, wakey!**
SAMMY: **Er, umah** (*gulps*). **Keep those ghosts away from me.** (*Waves arms about, still lying on floor.*) **Keep away! Keep 'em out of it! Ah-h-h-h!**
MITZI: **Sammy, Sammy, wake up!** (*Goes and slaps his cheek.*) **Snap out of it. Come to.**
SAMMY (*sitting up*): **Oh! Mitzi, it's only you!**
MITZI (*angrily*): **Only ME? Sammy McSeaweed, what do you mean?** (*Getting angrier*) **Only ME, indeed!**
SAMMY: **B-b-but I d-didn't m-m-mean it l-like that M-M-Mitzie. Honest, I d-didn't.** (*Mitzi snorts and walks off stage left. Sammy goes with her, shouting and gesticulating wildly.*

CURTAIN

# SPECIAL EFFECTS *by* IAN NESBITT

If the use of special effects are used in moderation, only when it is necessary to help to create the mood of the play, then the audiences will never fail to appreciate or grow tired of your performances.

SMOKE EFFECTS. If you wish to make your own smoke effect then take a rag, add water to saltpetre (3d. an ounce) to form a solution, dip the rag into the solution and leave it to dry. Take a small piece of the rag and place it into a tin and light it. You will find by experiment what strength of saltpetre solution to use and what size of rag is needed. The following amounts should give an idea: 1 teaspoonful saltpetre to a saucer of water.

If you prefer to buy commercial products for this purpose then "Chinese Coloured Smoke" from Ellisdon's (this is not the best product for this purpose but is safe to use and leaves no mess) at a cost of 6d. per packet. Available from "Tam Shepherd's Trick Shop" is a tube of three smoke pellets (2/6d.), the address being Queen Street, Glasgow, C.1.

RAIN.—To create the effect of rain put some dried peas in a hat box (or nearly any type of cardboard box) or a sieve and roll them about in it.

SHOTS.—For a small auditorium a cap pistol, and for a large auditorium a blank cartridge.

HORSE'S HOOFS.—Knocking together of two coconut shells, or two plastic bowls.

THUNDER.—Sheet of very stiff cardboard shaken vigorously or sheet of galvanised iron or tin.

BREAKING GLASS.—Pour broken glass or some pieces of metal into steel bucket.

FLASHES.—From "Tam Shepherd's" one can obtain " "Flash Cotton" (1/3), or you could obtain some manganese ribbon from a chemistry teacher or from a good chemist's shop. By and large it is very difficult to obtain "Flash Paper" though it is very good stuff. If you would like to buy chemicals and make your own coloured smoke then here is a rough guide. For a green flame, mix one part of soot with four parts of potassium chlorate and eight parts of flowers of sulphur. For a red flame, use four parts of antimony sulphide to five parts of potassium chlorate with thirteen parts of flowers of sulphur and forty parts of strontium nitrate. When using these mixtures take care to ensure proper fire precautions, but providing you use your common-sense then there should never be any accidents.

LIGHTNING.—Again one can use many of the effects for this mentioned in the part on flashes. You can also use photographic flash bulbs which are, I think, the safest way for lightning.

FIRE.—A lamp socket is fitted to a block of wood, which acts as a base. Make a cylinder of red cellophane (or alternatively use white cellophane with a red bulb) and paint on flame-shapes in black ink. Fit the cellophane on to a wire framework (a cylindrical lampshade is ideal). To the cross-pieces of the frame attach pieces of tin shaped like propeller blades and set at an angle. Hang the shade up on a piece of stout wire, with a hook in the end, let into the base. When the light is turned on, the rising hot air will make the blades revolve and give a good impression of a flickering fire.

# PELPUPS WRITE

CHARLES RENWICK—In my holidays I went to 44 Monmouth Street, London, W.C.2, where there is a toy museum which has supplies of Pollock's toy theatres and plays, etc., which are sold. We looked round the rooms, to find Dutch dolls, Javanese rod puppets, marionnettes and Punches which date quite far back into history, and of beautiful craftsmanship. There were also photographs of the first British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild Meetings. I am lucky to live near James Richardson, a Country Councillor for the Guild. He has made a permanent Glove Puppet Theatre of his own. When I went to visit him he showed me some of his puppets and some owned by the British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild.

CERI GRIFFIN—Just before we started painting the sets for "Aladdin" my father built me a new stage, which folds up into a flat screen. Also, I have a very good lighting system. It consists of a red bulb, a green, white, blue and amber, plus footlights.

SUSAN TILLOTSON—My stage is pink and has curtains on a running cord. Mummy did not realise how expensive they were till it was too late! I have four wings and a black backcloth. I keep my puppets on a long wire going from one end of the mantelpiece to the other and I have several hooks behind the backcloth for the puppets actually in the play. We have the stage on a table, so that people can see better. We find that the children who have to sit on the floor slowly come closer and closer until they can see in the wings. I bought some luminous paint and painted my Skeleton and quite often I scare my friends with it. I don't do things like that on the stage, but I get them in a circle in the dark and then they can't see me or its strings.

LINDA ANNISON—I have only one puppet, which is the Fairy; but by changing her clothes I can make her into all kinds of things. By putting a black cape round her, I can make her into a wicked fairy or an old woman, providing that none of her old dress shows. You can prevent this by putting a bit of black cloth round that part that shows. I would like a girl pen friend, aged 10–12, from anywhere; hobbies: stamp collecting, reading and swimming. 173 Cairo Street, Hendon, Sunderland.

COLIN DAVIES—The puppet I have under construction is "Mr. Fiddle-De-Dee," who plays the violin. I got the idea from one of Jan Bussel's books. I use moulded heads for my puppets. I get a wooden ball (2-in.) and cover most of it with a tube of plastic wood which, while soft, is easily malleable. I have a cart on which my puppet theatre will fit so that it can be transported easily.

DUNCAN GILLIES—We have a Marionette Society at school which is very popular. We have a big stage with an ornamental front and blue curtains. We also have a small switchboard. At home I have 11 of your puppets and one of your stages. Together with two friends we form the A.D.M. Club. I use our garden shed for our shows. The last show we did was called "Space Ace" and our funds were £1 1s. 0d. Some people came twice. We charged 1/- for adults, 6d. for children and 2/6 for a ticket for three shows.

ALEC SAYER—I have 12 marionettes now and I am very fortunate to have a spare room to keep a large stage and my collection in. I put on performances when people come visiting and as I have 32 cousins from the age of 14 and under, these performances come on very often.

STEPHEN WEST—I have recently bought a large puppet theatre from my friend and I am designing a lighting system for it. It has velvet curtains, which are operated by two strings at one side of the stage. There is also a piece of wood that can be removed from the stage floor, for use with glove puppets.

DAPHNE GREY—Last Christmas I and some friends had a puppet show. It was 3d. to get in and we had refreshments at the interval. We made £1 and sent it to U.N.I.C.E.F.

GORDON COOKE—For a small stage a good lighting system is formed by a set of Christmas tree lights. If arranged in bunches they give quite a good effect. Swop the colours around for different sets. I think this system is good for younger ones, who are not usually very good electricians.

DIANA PORTEUS—Last year, when looking for a play we came across "The Pastel" from a book of puppet plays by H. W. Whanslaw. This was ideal for us and we performed it with great success. The other plays in this book are too difficult technically for us to do. If you could suggest a play, or plays, which would suit our needs I should be very grateful indeed. I should be very glad to hear from any Pelpups who live near me in Acton or Ealing or thereabouts. Address: 12 Mayfield Road, W. Acton, London, W.3.

*Jan Bussell's new book of plays will be ready in two weeks; its price, though, is still undecided. Your backcloth idea is very good. I will try to include it next time.*

RICHARD GISHLER, EDMONTON, CANADA—Why don't you string your puppets in one colour, preferably black. I realise the multi-coloured strings make re-stringing much simpler, but they show up against any backdrop.

*Coloured strings should show up less against a coloured background than black ones. I wouldn't worry too much if the strings do show; they are part of the puppet.*

P. N. WILKS—These holidays we have been hard at work with the lighting; we managed to get hold of a switchboard used in bomber squadrons during the war, and have put it to good use. Now we have two spot lights, two coffee tin flood lights and four side lights. I have eight puppets altogether and the latest addition was a Martian. To make the heads, my friend makes a ball of plaster of paris and when hard it is very easy to carve and shape the features; it is then painted and hair is added.

WILLIAM UG, SINGAPORE—Please tell me whether I am the first Chinese to write to you.

*Yes, I think you are, and I hope you won't be the last.*

BILL MCBIRNIE, 2 STEELE STREET, PORT COLBORNE, ONTARIO, CANADA—I find a lot of people complain about wigs and hair for their puppets. What I do is get flour and water and make flour paste; then I dip strips of newspaper in this and put it on the puppet's head; then, while it is still wet, part it, make curls or whatever you want. Shellack the head after it is thoroughly dry, paint it desired colour and you will have shiny, good-looking hair. I would like some pen friends. I am aged 10 and my hobbies are modern jazz, puppetry, stamps and coins.

STEWART SUTCLIFFE—I have already performed two plays in aid of "Freedom From Hunger." I charged 1d. for one and 3d. for another.

DEREK MERCER—My Dad has made me a puppet theatre. It is 2ft. 9in. high, 3ft. wide. I use a transformer for the bulbs; it looks very good in the dark. I use my projector for a spotlight.

MARGARET TIMS—Three friends and myself have started a Puppet Club. We did two small shows for our parents and some friends and sold refreshments. We also charged an admission fee and we made £1 13s. 6d. for the "Freedom From Hunger" campaign. At the moment, we are rehearsing another show in order to raise money for the Sunflower Children's Homes.

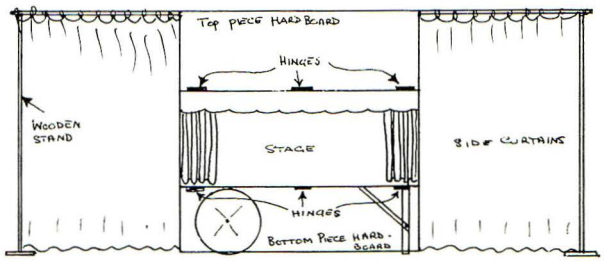
PETER A. LACKER, 123 WISBECH ROAD, MARCH, CAMBS.—I would like very much a see some puppeteers in the March or Wisbech area, so we could get together and do a super duper charity show (excuse unorthodox expressions!) together. My phone is March 2390.

KAREN BURCH—I have been a member of the Pelpup Club about 12 years. It was really the Club which kept my interest in puppets for so long. Between the ages of eight and 14 I gave many charity shows. After 14 I only gave one or two shows, as I had studies to attend to at school. Now, as you can see from the newspaper cutting, I have started puppetry once more. I hope to become professional in a small way. "Fireball XL5 keeps me amused and I notice quite a number of simple actions, which look most effective. At present my act is done without a stage and I wear tights to hide the strings. Of course, there is a great deal of work to be done on the presentation, but I have plenty of ideas and I think after my years of absence the puppet theatre has won me back.

ROBERT BINDER, 1706 EASTERN PARKWAY, NEW YORK. I have just returned from summer camp, where I was employed as Dramatics Counsellor and of course my puppets played a big part in the programme. Apart from several impromptu shows, the boys (aged 9 years), presented a 45-minute version of "Pinocchio," complete with full musical score, for the entire camp. There were seven boys backstage with me, including three puppeteers and one boy each on curtains, lights, scenery and tape recorder. The tape is used only for the musical sequences, as I have found recorded dialogue sounds artificial and loses much of the total effect of the show. Last winter I produced a one-hour version of "The Wizard of Oz," based on the old Judy Garland film. For the benefit of those Pelpups who seem reluctant to re-costume their puppets, I should like to explain that I have re-dressed nearly all of my puppets (and they number over 50 now) completely, from the patterns printed in the Pelpup News. Special costumes that were made for "Wizard" include the Cowardly Lion's outfit, which was made from synthetic fur and cotton padding; and the Tin Woodsman, who wore a tin can for a shirt and a small funnel for a hat. The Lion was made from an old Mr. MacBoozle and was able to wipe his nose and his eyes with his tail. For his mane, I dyed MacBoozle's white wool hair with gold paint. The Tin Woodsman was a former Dutch Boy, whom I painted with aluminium paint, leaving the arms and legs undressed so that they looked like metal parts. The Munchkins were several Noddys and Big Ears played the Munchkin Mayor. The show was run by two puppeteers (working a total of 15 puppets) and a third person on the tape recorder. My audience was very pleased with the performance, which was for a girl's birthday party.

HARVEY PETTIT—I am writing on behalf of "Les Marionettes," a group of teenagers comprisfive boys and five girls, of which I am chief. Our club room is situated in the grounds of the house of one of our members in Milford Haven. We formed our club at Christmas and later found our old puppet theatre, which is half the size of our new one, too small for our requirements, so the other four boys and I built a new one. This is 10ft. x 2ft. 4in. x 3ft. 6in. but the pelmet cuts off 6 ins. of the back, so that the back is higher than the front, allowing the puppeteers to move their

hands freely without the audience seeing them. The girls wall-papered the puppet theatre and with the aid of the boys rigged up heavy red curtains so that by manipulating a cord they would open and close. To light the theatre we have six bulb sockets, three of which hold coloured bulbs—red, blue and green; the rest are 150-watt white bulbs. To control these we have a master control unit comprising seven switches to switch on and off the lights according to our requirements. Hinged on top of our new theatre we have a large piece of hardboard 3 ft. in height. On the bottom we have another piece of hardboard hinged to hide the trolley on which the puppet theatre is standing. This is two feet off the ground. Later on, we hope to cover it with quilted plastic. When not in use the hardboard closes up to the front of the theatre, thereby guarding the painted pelmet. At the side, we have two large stands to support curtains by means of a rod. We are therefore completely hidden from the audience. We have made sturdy props for a coffee bar scene, a laboratory scene, a woodland scene, and a kitchen scene. We work our puppets mainly to records and use a tape recorder for plays. Altogether, we have 23 puppets, of which only five are Pelham Puppets. We find them much better than our old ones but are still going to keep them as they were the puppets that started us off. The first show we gave was for the old people of our town. This was a great success, as we had practised for it. After this, many followed. One of our newspaper cuttings is enclosed. As you see, three of our puppeteers could not attend, as one was in hospital with tonsilitis and the other two were taking part in our Grammar School Gala. We hope later on to send you coloured photographs of our new puppet theatre.




ANDREW MAYFIELD, INGLEWOOD, BRANKSOMEWOOD RD., FLEET, HANTS—I recommend Russ Conway records for dancing. One fault I find with records is that they are often just a little too long. Have you any suggestions to overcome this difficulty?

*Yes, always avoid using the whole of a record. Even the new small records are too long. The ideal is to use the first half and if you have a tape recorder, record just the selected pieces of each record. Then you have a lively, interesting performance and no bother with changing records.*

I would very much like a male pen friend living in any English speaking country. I am now 13 and my hobbies are puppetry, architecture, fossils and modern design.

CHARLES HAYTER—265 Niagara Street, Winnipeg 9, Canada, has started a puppet club and would like to hear from any Pelpups living near him or anywhere in Canada.

JULIE WINCH—119 Mandeville Road, Northolt, Greenford, Mdx., would like a pen friend in Melbourne, Australia, aged 10–12 years. Hobbies: reading, art and swimming.

GRANT POLLARD—Middleton Farm, Vanryn Street, Constantia, Cape, S. Africa, would like a pen friend (boy) in S. America.

WILMA STODDART—128 West Graham Street, Glasgow, C.4, would like a pen friend in Switzerland or Japan, girl or boy, aged 12–13 years. Hobbies: playing the piano, swimming, reading and collecting.

HELEN DOUGHTY—The Spinney, Bagshot Road, Worplesdon Hill, Woking, Surrey, would like any English speaking pen friend anywhere except in the British Isles, preferably France or America, aged 11–13. Hobbies: mainly ballet, reading, puppetry and collecting foreign dolls.

PAUL TAYLOR—Gwefn House, St. Mary's College, Colwyn Bay, N. Wales, would like to hear from any Pelpups living in or around Stafford.

CAROL BRIGGS—St. James, West Malvern, Worcs., would like a girl pen friend, about 11–12 years, in India, Australia, America or S. Africa. Hobbies: stamp collecting, puppetry, animals, listening to pop records, collecting foreign dolls.

CHRISTINE HOLT—76B Birchall Avenue, Darwen, Lancs., would like a girl pen friend of 13–14 in England of any European country. Hobbies: reading, puppetry, collecting dolls in costume, and puppetry.

RICHARD GAPE—82 Ilchester Crescent, Bedminster Down, Bristol 3, would like a boy pen friend in America, aged 10–11. Hobbies: puppetry, birds' nesting and drawing.

VICKI GRAY—216 Washway Road, Sale, Cheshire, would like a girl pen friend from Canada or England, aged 10–11. Hobbies: stamp collecting, ballroom dancing, reading and collecting foreign dolls. She would also like to hear from any Pelpups living near her.

LARRY GROSSMAN—3 Tollgate Drive, East Northport, New York, would like a pen friend in France, Sweden or Canada, who can write English. Aged 11–12.

GARY BRAID—67 Millstone Avenue, Butt Lane, Talke, Stoke-on-Trent, would like a pen friend living anywhere in England, aged 11–13. Hobbies: football, puppetry, stamp collecting, cricket, indoor games and pop records.

PAUL FINCH—104 Handcroft Road, West Croydon, Surrey, would like a Pelpup living anywhere to write to him. Aged 11–12; boy. Hobbies: the Beatles, puppetry and reading.

STEPHEN and BARRY WHITE—1 Bullsmoor Way, Waltham Cross, Herts., would like Pelpups living near to Enfield to contact them to assist in their performances.

LYNNE BONEHAM—12 Bradenstoke Road, Caldwell, Nuneaton, Worcs., would like a pen friend from anywhere, aged 12–13, boy or girl, interested in pets and writing.

CHRISTINE MENZIES—5 Epsom College, Epsom, Surrey, would like to hear from anyone living near her. She would also like a pen friend from anywhere except England, Wales or Ireland, aged 10–12. Hobbies: puppetry, ballet, chess and collecting foreign dolls.

TIM SLAATLE—15611 Index Street, Granada Hills, California, U.S.A., would like a pen friend, boy or girl, aged 12–13 in any part of the world. Hobbies: puppets, horse riding and swimming.

LINDA CARTWRIGHT—22 Hollemeadow Avenue, Leamore, Walsall, Staffs., would like a girl pen friend aged 11–13, in any country except England. Hobbies: collecting foreign dolls, reading, swimming, dancing and puppetry.

LINDA SILCOCK—72 Wood Walk, Wombwell, Barnsley, Yorks., would like a pen friend, girl or boy, anywhere, 12–14. Hobbies: puppetry, drawing and dressmaking.

DAPHNE GREY—26 Rathdown Park, Terenure, Dublin, N. Ireland, would like a pen friend in England, Scotland or Wales; girl, aged 13; and would also like to hear from any Pelpups living near her. Hobbies: puppetry, stamp collecting, swimming, roller skating and pop records.

TONY MALLION—"Veron," 46 Nile Road, Gorleston, Gt. Yarmouth, would like a pen friend in Norway or Switzerland or America. Hobbies: puppets, theatre and photography.

PETER READ—School House, Eastcourt Street, Devizes, Wilts., would like a boy pen friend aged 13–14 in America, New Zealand or Australia. Hobbies: train spotting, puppetry and Rugby. He would also like to hear from any Pelpups living near Devizes.

C. LEE—20 Ludlow Drive, Higher Fold, Leigh, Lancs., would like a pen friend in America aged about 11. Hobbies: stamp collecting, chess and puppetry.

SHIRLEY DENT—133 Whitecotes Lane, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, would like a pen friend from Australia, Canada, S. Africa or Southern Australia (Speaking English), aged 10–11. Hobbies: nursing, swimming, collecting foreign dolls and beer-mats, and puppetry.

BERNARD SAUNDERS—Ascension Vicarage, Thornhill Avenue, Plumstead, London, S.E.18, would like a boy pen friend from Australia, aged 11–12. Hobbies: swimming, puppetry, stamp collecting, animals, reading and birds.

LINDA SINGLETON—90 Pennine Road, Woodley, Cheshire, would like a French girl pen friend aged 11–12. Hobbies: puppetry, swimming, sketching and reading. (To write in English).

DAVID CRAWLEY—122 Salisbury Road, Welwyn Garden City, who is aged 9, would like to hear from any Pelpups living near him.

SANDRA SMITH—Holly Mount, Sandy Hall Lane, Barrowford, Nr. Nelson, Lancs., would like a pen friend, girl, aged 11–12, from America. Hobbies: animals, puppetry and collecting foreign dolls.

JANE ROCHE—7 Abbey Walk South, Coronation Road, Halifax, would like a pen friend anywhere in England who has a pony. Hobbies: horse riding and puppetry.

CATHERINE RAE—7 Oakland Avenue, Hatfield, Nr. Doncaster, would like a girl pen friend in America, New Zealand or Australia. Hobbies: music swimming and puppetry.

CAROLE HOWLETT—8 Beechwood Avenue, Staines, Mdx., would like a pen friend in Austria, Holland, Denmark or Norway; girl, aged 10–11, interested in animals, flowers, puppetry, cycling, dolls in National Costume. She would also like to hear from any Pelpups living near her.

HILARY DAVIES—38 Nethan Drive, Aveley, Essex, would like a pen friend in Australia or New Zealand; boy or girl. Hobbies: stamp collecting, music, swimming and puppetry.

ANN GOSMAN—290 Ferry Road, Edinburgh 5, would like a pen friend in America or Australia. She is eight years old and interested in reading, music and puppetry.

PAT HALL—4 Thorney Road, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Staffs., would like a pen friend aged 10–11, boy or girl, living in France, Germany or America. Hobbies: scrambling, stamp collecting, ice skating and puppets.

SUSAN OLIVER—58 Dalvine Road, Dudley Wood, Cradley Heath, Staffs., would like a pen friend, girl, aged 12–13, interested in typing and ballroom dancing.

CHRISTINE SMITH—52 Inks Green, Chingford, London, E.4., would like a pen friend in America or anywhere except the British Isles. She would like to hear from a boy aged 15 or over and her hobbies are table tennis, writing and reading.

CAROL LAMES—30 Argyll Avenue, Southall, Mdx., would like to have a pen friend in England, aged about 13, girl, whose hobbies are skating (roller), puppetry and embroidery.

GILLIAN MARSHALL—26 Hounslow Road, Macworth Estate, Derby, would like a pen friend in Canada aged about 10 years, a girl interested in art and puppets.

HEATHER LUMSDEN—197A New Haw Road, Weybridge, Surrey, would like a pen friend, a girl aged about 11 years, from anywhere in the world. Hobbies: gardening, music, puppetry, swimming, tennis and writing stories.

DEREK STRICKLAND—150 Calley Down Crescent, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey, would like a boy pen friend living in France, aged 13–14, and who speaks a little English. Derek's hobby is sport in general.

CATHERINE ROE—7 Oakland Avenue, Hatfield, Nr. Doncaster, Yorks., would like a pen friend aged about 10–12 years.

ANDREW BEAUMONT—Newsagent, High Street, Nailsea, would like to hear from any Pelpups living near him. He would also like a pen friend, living anywhere. Hobbies: riding, puppetry, swimming, playing cricket, Aged 9–11 years.

GEMMA HASLAM—Myrtles, Eastbourne Street, Midhurst, Sussex, would like to hear from anyone in the Chichester-Haslemere-Midhurst area who would be interested in helping her to form a Puppet Group.
Group.

GERALDINE CHARLES—25 Racton Road, Fulham, London, S.W.6, would like a pen friend from either France or America; girl, who can speak English, aged 10–12 years. Hobbies: reading, knitting, making up dolls' knitting patterns, writing plays, swimming. Most favourite hobbies: puppetry and acting.

JOSEPHINE HAGUE—10 Aldwych Place, Brownhill, Blackburn, Lancs., would like a pen friend, a girl aged 9–11 years, in New Zealand, America, Canada or Australia. Hobbies: stamp collecting, ballroom dancing and pets.

DOREEN BRINDLEY—11 Radnor Place, Mansfield, Notts, would like a pen friend from anywhere who can speak English; girl or boy, aged 9–11. Hobbies: roller skating, reading (adventure books especially.

ELAINE IVENS—17 Rugby Road, Clifton upon Dunsmore, Nr. Rugby, writes that her sister Jayne would like a pen friend in Ireland, America, Australia or Canada, aged 7–9 years. Jayne is seven and her hobbies are swimming, puppetry, collecting stamps, dolls in National Costumes, and handwork.

SUSAN KELLY—78 Instock Avenue, Burton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs., would like a pen friend in America or Holland, boy or girl, aged 10–11 years. Hobbies: dolls in National Costume, knitting, puppetry, reading and roller skating. Susan would also like to hear from any Pelpups living near her.

TONY CLOTHIER—15 Greenoaks, North Lancing, Sussex, would like a pen friend living anywhere, aged 11–12, whose hobbies are reading, puppets and collecting models.

GRAHAM CHATTIN—"Fairways", Penshett Road, Brierley Hill, Staffs., would like a pen friend in America, New Zealand, Canada, or anywhere in Europe, aged 8–11. Hobbies: stamps, books, music (an instrument or recorder), skating, pets and marionettes. A boy, also interested in tropical fish.

CAROLE KABLEAN—33 Longmead Drive, Sidcup, Kent, would like a pen friend in Eire, Australia or America, aged 10–12. Hobbies: roller skating, reading, writing poetry, and art.

CHRISTINE SHAW—3A Park Grove, Scriven, Knaresborough, Yorks., would like a pen friend in Australia. Hobbies: pets, reading, puppetry, cycling and collecting national dolls.

ALAN THORPE—138 Dryandra Street, O'Connor, Canberra A.C.T., Australia, would like a pen friend in the U.S.A. His hobbies are puppetry, acting, stamp collecting, collecting model soldiers, and reading.

J. C. PICKERING—Tall Trees, Victoria Road, Barnard Castle, would like to hear from any Pelpups living near.

MARILYN SINCLAIR SCOTT—Belsfield, Skelmorlie, Ayrshire, Scotland, would like to have a pen friend aged about 12–13, living in Hollywood, London or any Pelpups living near her. Hobbies: piano playing, stamp collecting, embroidery. She is also a Girl Guide.

JANET WHITE—22 Crosslands, Woodville Estate, Barnstaple, would like a girl pen friend, aged 10–11, living in Norway or Australia. Hobbies: puppetry, stamp collecting and animals. She would like her pen friend to speak English.

PENNY PRINCE—154 Spur Road, Orpington, Kent, would like a pen friend, preferably French, aged about 13. Hobbies: puppets, reading and drawing.

K. COCKCROFT, 1 Mosslands Drive, Wallasey, Cheshire, would like a pen friend from Spain, Japan or Mexico. His hobbies are swimming, camping, riding, stamp collecting and, especially, puppetry.

R. WARANS—24A St. Bernards Road, Slough, Bucks., would like to hear from any Pelpups, anywhere.

## RAGTIME RODEO FOR COWBOY AND HORSE

How de, folks, how de de do?
I'm a rooting, tooting cowboy, who
Not too fast and not too slow
Will take you off to a rodeo.
Here's Old Dobbifer galloping by
Whoa there, Pardner, hi-de-hi.
Step up lightly—lightly now,
Cross your feet—take a bow.
Turn around my fancy nag,
Hi! now give your tail a wag,
Make it good, they've paid hard dough
Just to see our Rodeo.
Yippee there, now don't you stop.
Let's hear those hoof beats go clip clop.
Canter gently round the square,
Giddy-up, giddy-up, giddy-up there.
Whoa there Gee-gee, don't say nay,
This is where we end the play.
On your hind legs up you go
To finish our Ragtime Rodeo.

(*This playlet should be used against a background of Square Dance music and is most effective if it is spoken in the style of a caller at a Square Dance*).

## PARTY PIECE FOR A CLOWN

I am the Clown, that's plain to see
Young and old, you all know me,
Gay and bright—of circus fame,
A Clown's a Clown, whatever his name.
I'll wave my hand (*does so*) before I sing,
"Boys and girls come out to play,"
It's waving still—please drop that string.
That's right! And now I'd like to mention
To take a bow is my intention. (*does so*).
All this to cleverer feats has led
So let me please stand on my head. (*does so*).
But if I don't do the things I should
It's not because I'm made of wood,
I'm all strung up, as you can see,
And all those strings aren't pulled by me,
So if the boy (*girl*) up there should stop,
Alas! alack! this clown's a flop.
I am the Clown, as I said before,
There isn't time for any more,
I'll stop my fooling and off I go,
So up with the curtain and on with the show.
*Alternative last line:*
So long, good luck and cheerio!

by RON FIELD



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